

and All-Russian Executive Committee, accept the platform established by all army organizations, and recognize the authority of the Iskosol. Then the Iskosol would clear them of all suspicion. For my part, I would defend before the commander of the army their claims for consolidation of battalions into larger units and promotion of their officers to higher grades.

The most influential person among the Letts was Colonel Vazetis, a shrewd, level-headed man with considerable military experience. I learned that he was a career soldier, fond of his job but embittered. He complained about favoritism in the old army, and it was clear that his main criticism of the old regime was its failure to make him a general. I asked what the reaction of his Tirailleurs would be to the promotion of one of their senior officers to the rank of general. He blushed and answered with conviction, "That would show them the new regime is fair toward the Letts and would strengthen their ties with the rest of the army."

When I suggested to General Parsky that Vazetis be promoted, he asked at once for his files and, after having leafed through them, said, "His record is good. The promotion is overdue at least six years. Surely he must be embittered."

General Vazetis became the most valuable link between the Lettish battalions and the army. Thanks largely to him, we had no more trouble with the Tirailleurs—until Kornilov's mutiny stirred up the army and triggered its disintegration.

Next on my tour came the lion's den, the Novo-Ladoga Regiment. The Iskosol was not on speaking terms with it, and my visit was arranged by the division commander, who volunteered to accompany me. The regiment was stationed in an advanced position. As we drove toward them, the general confessed that he had not visited this outfit in the last two months, since it had declared its allegiance to the Communist party.

The regiment's reserves were housed in tents in a clearing. The regimental committee awaited us in front of a tent; the officers were assembled in front of another tent on the opposite side of the clearing. Soldiers were milling about in between or lay on the ground. I went with the committeemen into their tent. They asked me whether I had any special desire concerning the agenda for the meeting. I replied that I intended to talk with the regiment about military affairs. In a short time, I said, the nation will elect the Constituent Assembly, and at that election everybody will be free to express his opinions by ballot. What the Assembly decides will be the law of the land. I therefore have no intention of talking politics with the men. But I would like to clarify some questions about the attitude of the regiment as part of the Russian revolutionary army—about such things